

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 and 13-20 are pending. Applicants propose amendment of claim 1.

Claims 1-5, 7, 8, 13 and 14 were rejected under 35 USC §102(a) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,410,677 (Enoki et al.). Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Enoki et al. is directed to an insulating material which includes (A) a compound having an amphiphatic property, and (B) a heat-resistant resin having a glass transition temperature higher than a thermal decomposition temperature of the compound (A). The compound (A) forms a micelle structure upon evaporation of solvent so as to give rise to phase separation against the compound (B). That is, the compound (A) is thermally decomposed and evaporated before the glass transition temperature of the compound (B) is reached, to thereby form fine pores.

Enoki et al. discloses examples of its heat-resistance resin (B) beginning at column 4, line 38, and provides examples of solvents beginning at column 4, line 54. Enoki et al. forms its insulating material by dissolving the resin composition in the solvent to obtain a varnish and then coating the varnish on an appropriate substrate (column 5, lines 19-25).

Enoki et al. fails to provide a resist pattern thickening material which is capable of thickening a resist pattern to be thickened as set forth in amended claim 1.

Amendment After Final Rejection
Application No. 10/670,291
Attorney Docket No. 031181

Claims 1-3, 5-8 and 13-18 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by JP Patent Application Publication No. 2001-109165(Kanda et al.). EP 1223 470 is a family member.

Kanda et al. requires the presence of a cross-linking agent. See paragraphs [0019]-[0022] of EP '470. Since the present claims utilize "consisting of" language, the cross-linking agents which are required by Kanda et al. are excluded. As such, Kanda et al. fails to anticipate the claims.

Claims 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kanda et al. in view of US Patent No. 6,319,853 (Ishibashi et al.).

As noted above, since Kanda et al. requires a cross-linking agent. Kanda et al. fails to teach or suggest a resist pattern thickening material consisting of a resin, a surfactant, and optionally organic solvent, thermal acid generating agents and quenchers. Ishibashi et al. fails to provide any teaching or suggestion which would have motivated one of ordinary skill in the art to employ a resist pattern thickening material as claimed.

For at least the foregoing reasons, the claimed invention distinguishes over the cited art and defines patentable subject matter. Favorable reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

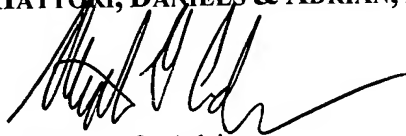
Should the Examiner deem that any further action by applicants would be desirable to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone applicants' undersigned attorney.

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If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen G. Adrian', is written over the firm name.

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